THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."—ISAIAH.

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SACRED METALLIC PLATES.

BY O. PRATT.

(*Concluded from page* 788.)

The correspondent of the Occident labors hard to prove to himself and others, that the Stone containing the sculptured Moses, around whom were written the Ten Commandments in the holy tongue and primitive Hebrew character, was a Teraphim or talisman which he supposes they consulted, as ancient Laban did his gods. But this is all conjecture. The Nephites, in the days of their righteousness, inquired of the Lord, through their Prophets and Seers, the same as the twelve tribes did in the land of their fathers. By divine commandment they left Jerusalem. By visions, and revelations, and prophecies, and miraculous manifestations, they were guided throughout their journeyings, both by land and water. And after arriving on the coast of Chili, they were still governed by revelations, as direct as those given to the former Prophets of Israel. Their revelations were recorded, both upon metallic Plates and other materials. Do learned Hebraists suppose that God was only the God of Judah? Was he not also with Elijah, with Elisha, and with hundreds of Prophets, raised up among the ten tribes? Was the spirit of prophecy and revelation, confined within the limits of the holy land? Did not he raise up Daniel in a foreign land? If Hebrews were in America, as is proved beyond all controversy, by these late discoveries, why refuse to them Prophets, and Seers, and Kings, and mighty men of God? Is the spirit of revelation confined to the Eastern hemisphere, and are miracles, signs, and wonders limited to Israel of the East? Is the arm of Jehovah shortened, that he could not make it bare also in behalf of the Israelites of the West? And would not a Hebrew Bible of ancient America, be just as sacred as a Hebrew Bible of ancient Asia?

The Hebrew mound builders were not a forsaken, forlorn, outcast branch of Israel, just descending into the depths of barbarism and darkness; but, they were, in the day of their righteousness, far in advance in civilization and enlightenment, of all the rest of the tribes. They had their temples built under the direction

Prophets; they offered their sacrifices and burnt offerings, and were as strict in all the ceremonies and rites of the law of Moses, as the ancient Jews at Jerusalem. They had their sacred breast-plate, Urim and Thummim, and living oracles,—their Priesthood, after the order of Melchisedek,—their anointed kings,—their Prophets, foretelling the future,—their Seers, beholding the wonders of eternity,—their inspired Patriarchs, blessing their children and the nation,—their sacred Records, to be revealed, in the last days, for the redemption of Israel,—their splendid miracles and pillar of fire. They also had the ministering of angels, and the voice of Jehovah; and what is greater than all, they had the personal ministry of their resurrected Messiah, who descended from heaven in their presence, and taught them for several days. As the great Shepherd and Stone of Israel, he literally led "Joseph as a flock."

Moreover, did the twelve tribes have a land of promise? So did the remnant of Joseph. Did Abraham and Isaac obtain the little country of Palestine and its immediate surroundings, for the inheritance of their seed? So did the Patriarch Israel: yes, more—his blessings "prevailed above that of his progenitors:" Canaan was too small; "the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills" were also given to him. America—the half of a world, was bequeathed to the princely Patriarch! Who among his noble sons, was worthy of this immense landed inheritance—these inexhaustible riches of the ancient mountains—these "utmost bounds" of almost another world? The aged Patriarch answers:—"They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." Oh, Joseph! thou favored son of Israel! thy portion in connection with the twelve tribes in Palestine was not enough! thine inheritance was to be overspread "with a multitude of nations" of thy seed! Because of thine integrity, thou didst supplant Reuben the first born of Israel, and enter into vast possessions—into the rights of the oldest heir! As "a fruitful bough," thy "branches run over the wall;" they stretched out over the sea; thine were the "blessings of the deep that lieth under," (or nearly in the antipodes of Palestine.) "The arms of thine hands were made streng by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." He it was who blessed "thee with the blessings of heaven above," and poured down without measure, "the precious things of heaven," which were written upon enduring tablets of metal, to help fill the earth with the knowledge of God, as the waters fill the bosom of the great deep. Well did Moses, the man of God, bless thy land above that of every other tribe. While Palestine yielded only the productions of a temperate zone, thy land was to bring forth "the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof;" that is, it was to produce the luxuries of all climates, whether in the temperate or torrid zones. But let us have it in the prophetic words of Moses himself:—

"And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath." This must have reference to the Pacific ocean a little west of Chili, the landing place of the Nephites; for this is the only deep which is directly beneath Palestine; and this too is the only "deep that coucheth beneath," on which the Josephites had extensive shipping. It was on the western coast of their promised land that the sons of Joseph navigated their ships, and spread their sails to the pacific breezes of that mild ocean. But we return to the further blessings of Moses:—Blessed, "for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon; and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush, let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren." (Deuteronomy 33: 13—16.) "The ancient mountains" has reference to the mountains of the Western hemisphere, where the ancient sons of God of the antediluvian race resided; where Enoch founded ancient Zion;

and where Noah built his ancient ark. The land, blessed by the Patriarchs of the old antediluvian world, becomes the promised land—the Eden of the sons of Joseph. "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock," or as the glory of the first born of Israel. "His horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." (verse 17.) This prediction refers to the great work which the horns of Joseph will perform in pushing the righteous together, not to Palestine, but "to the ends of the earth," or to their own promised land, which is, indeed, "to the ends of the earth" from where Moses uttered the prophecy. "The ten thousands of Ephraim," which, as Hosea predicts, are "mixed among the nations," will become "the Lord's first born," in the great latter-day dispensation. Their lineage being revealed by the everlasting covenant, through the revelations of the Spirit, God will send them forth to all nations, that they may fulfil their high destiny, first among the Gentiles, and then among the Jews.

In bringing about the great redemption of Zion and Jerusalem, Ephraim need not envy Judah, and Judah need not vex Ephraim. Both have their promised lands, and both have their predicted work to perform. The Jews will rebuild Old Jerusalem; Ephraim and Manasseh will build the New Jerusalem. The Zion of the Old Jerusalem will occupy its former place; the Zion of the New Jerusalem will be located in a place "Sought Out," and will be "a city not forsaken," as the Eastern Zion has been. The Jews will build a great temple, and their Messiah will descend upon the mount of Olives, and in his glory, will pass through the East gate of that glorious edifice, and will enter the temple and seat himself upon his throne, and fill the house with his glory. But a temple will also be built in the New Jerusalem, unto the sons of Joseph, into which the Messiah will enter in all his glory, long before he favors the Jews with his presence.

The ten tribes will come from the north countries, where they have been hid up for ages, by an encircling zone of mountain ice; but they will not return to Jerusalem, until they have visited Joseph's land, and received their blessings, under the hands of the Lord's "first born." And after the pain and severe afflictions of Judah are past, the ten tribes will join them, and receive their inheritance in the land of their fathers, and with Judah will come under one king, and "they will no more be two nations; neither be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." In those days, the land of the ancient mountains—the heritage of Joseph, will be married to the land of the East. Old ocean will seek its ancient home in the polar regions, and the dry land assume the position it occupied before the days of Peleg.

Joseph's Bible, united with Judah's, will, indeed, accomplish wonders. The Bible of the ten tribes, embracing their sacred history and numerous revelations and prophecies from the time they passed dry shod into the polar regions, until they return on the great highway which will be thrown up for them in the midst of the great deep, will be a volume of wonders, swelling the present canon of Scripture to an immense size. To all this will be added the old Jaredite Scriptures, embracing the doings of a great people, for sixteen centuries, together with the revelations of a vast number of their Prophets, whose sacred metallic Books are yet to come forth to increase the knowledge of God among men. Revelations will be multiplied on Revelations, Bibles on Bibles, until the Sacred Archives of the Old and New Jerusalems will be filled with an immensity of knowledge, shedding forth light and truth to all the surrounding nations. In that day the temple of heaven will be opened, and disclose the mighty volumes of eternity; and the sacred Books of Earth will be united with the sacred Books of Heaven, and there will be a general unsealing of volumes, and the judgment will sit, and generations and ages past, will be judged out of the volumes written, every man according to his deeds, and according to the measure of light that shone upon him in his day.

In the midst of this overwhelming light, what will be thought of those poor ignorant creatures, called modern divines, who have been contending for generations that the canon of Scripture is full, that there will be no more Prophets—no more revelations—no more Bible—we have enough? The very thought of such heaven-daring assertions, is enough to make one shudder, and to cause poor humanity to blush with shame, for the apostacy and ignorance of our fallen race.

Notwithstanding the vast accumulations of evidence, proving the Jewish origin of the American Indians, yet the enlightened Jew has an aversion to claim in them a brotherhood. He contemplates them sunk down into the very depths of degradation and savage life, weltering apparently under the withering curse of Jehovah, with knowledge but little in advance of the brute beast, with a dirty copper colored exterior, rendered still more frightful by horrid daubs of paint and clay. Can it be possible, exclaims the Jew, that these low and degraded specimens of humanity are my kindred? Can they be the seed of Israel—the chosen seed? If so, whence then this skin of blackness—this blighting curse—this ferocious savageism? Listen! Oh, Judah, and hear the sad and mournful history of Joseph, thy brother; it is the history from the Gold Plates of Cumorah's hill; it is the voice of the dead, speaking from their ancient tombs; it is the voice of Prophets whose speech is low out of the ground, and whispers mournfully from the dust. Listen to the words of Nephi:—

"Wherefore, the word of the Lord was fulfilled which he spake unto me, saying: That inasmuch as they will not hearken unto thy words, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. And behold, they were cut off from his presence. And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity. For behold, they had hardened their hearts against him, that they had become like unto a flint; wherefore, as they were white, and exceeding fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people, the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them. And thus saith the Lord God, I will cause that they shall be loathsome unto thy people, save they shall repent of their iniquities. And cursed shall be the seed of him that mixeth with their seed; for they shall be cursed even with the same cursing. And the Lord spake it, and it was done. And because of their cursing which was upon them, they did become an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety, and did seek in the wilderness for beasts of prey. And the Lord God said unto me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in remembrance of me; and inasmuch as they will not remember me, and hearken unto my words, they shall scourge them even unto destruction." (Book of Mormon, p. 66.)

The people who were thus cursed were called Lamanites, being the descendants of Laman and Lemuel, who were the brothers of Nephi, and also the descendants of two or three other families who came with them, to their promised land. Nine hundred and fifty-four years, after the above extract was written, the Nephites were destroyed by the Lamanites; since which time the latter have continued to dwindle, during the long period of fourteen centuries and upwards. And now their sacred tablets come forth, virtually saying, I am Joseph, doth my brother Judah still live? And one branch of them can say, I am of the Royal lineage of David, doth his throne still survive? While I write these last sentences, my heart swells with emotions of sorrow, and my eyes are a fountain of tears. I weep over the calamities of Israel, and my soul mourns over the long-continued afflictions of the chosen seed. When, Oh when, shall the sorrows of Israel cease? O Lord our God, "Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations? wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? I will hear what God the Lord will speak." * * * "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven." (Psalm 85.) "In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the Book." * * * "And Jacob shall no longer be made

ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale." (Isaiah 29.)

Again my heart is comforted; for in fulfilment of ancient promises, the earth has opened, and brought forth salvation; the skies pour down righteousness: the long promised Book is revealed: glad tidings for Israel have sprung out of the earth, proclaiming redemption and everlasting glory to the seed of Jacob: The seed of Joseph will soon begin to flourish and blossom as the rose: Judah will arise, and seek their ancient home: Israel in the north will remember the promised good things upon the mountains, hills, and vales of their ancestors; and they shall flow unto Zion, and their soul shall be as a watered garden, and shall sorrow no more at all; but with Judah, "they shall seek the Lord their God and David their king." Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath sent his angel with words of peace and comfort to Jacob. Let all the scattered remnants, who long for the redemption of Zion, know assuredly that the God of their fathers has remembered the new and everlasting covenant, and revealed the same, not upon tablets of stone, but of gold, undimmed by time, significant of the everlasting duration of the covenant.

PROCRASTINATION.

BY ELDER FRANCIS L. GIBBONS.

There are some people who are constantly putting off till to-morrow things which should and ought to be done to-day; this is found to be the case even among the Saints, for they have not as yet reached perfection: hence, they are often found giving way to a spirit and feeling of indolence and neglect, in regard to their every-day duties. We find it recorded in sacred history, that the Apostle Paul had occasion, from time to time, to stir up the minds of the Saints who were placed under his care, to a sense of their duties and obligations to God; for they, like us, were prone to be, at times, slack concerning their duties. So long as we are here in this state of probation and trial, we are open and liable to be led astray, if we do not live and act up to our duties and callings. Procrastination may with propriety be said, to be the thief of time, and if we do not keep awake, but permit ourselves to be led astray by its evil and seducing influences, it will eventually rob us of our time, our opportunities, and blessings. It then behoves the Saints to be constantly on their guard, and never, for one moment, to so far forget themselves, as to lay aside their armor, lest, in an unguarded moment, they be suddenly assailed, and thereby become an easy prey to the enemy of their souls. Put not off till to-morrow, what ought to be done to-day; for we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. The Scriptures say, to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation. Many try to exonerate themselves from blame for neglect of present duties, by forcing upon themselves the belief, that some other time in the future will do just as well as the present; but in this they deceive themselves: say they, we will do thus and so, and will attend to this duty, and keep such and such laws, when we get home to Zion: but why not observe them now, right here: we must live in the faith and practice of the Gospel here, as well as there, and now as well as then; if we do not, we shall find ourselves destitute of the Spirit of God and the blessings of heaven. It is a mistaken idea altogether in some, to think that a few thousand miles of travel will have the effect of entirely changing their nature, feelings, and disposition in regard to the work of God. True, they will thereby gain a knowledge and experience which they were not in possession of before, in regard to tra-

veiling both by sea and land, but their disposition and tendencies will not be materially affected thereby; hence, when they have got through the journey, and have time to look around, they find that they are precisely the same kind of persons which they were previous to commencing the journey. It becomes our duty, and is our privilege as Saints of God, to live our religion from hour to hour, and from day to day; our eternal salvation depends on it, and inasmuch as we do this, we need not feel troubled about our salvation in the future; for that will be secured to us, because we thus are saved from day to day. When we are counselled to do a thing to-day, let us not put it off till what to us may seem a more convenient season, peradventure such season may never come. History does not furnish us with any proof that the season referred to ever came, in the case of Felix the Roman governor, who, when he was convinced by the reasoning of the Apostle Paul, that he was innocent of the crimes laid to his charge, stifled his conscience, and hardened his heart for the time being, saying to Paul, go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. Had Noah, after he had been warned of God and commanded to build the ark, pursued such a course, putting off his task from day to day, he would never have accomplished it, and would, in consequence, have forfeited his salvation.

It is very erroneous to suppose, as some do, that having become acquainted with the first principles of the Gospel, they can sit down with folded arms and a contented mind, and look on with cool indifference, regardless as to their every-day duties; for the mere fact of having obeyed the first principles will save no person, be he whom or what he may; nothing short of continuing faithful in keeping the commandments of God to the end, will bring about that happy result. After obedience to the Gospel, our duties and responsibilities increase, instead of becoming less. From those to whom much is given much will be required; hence, we can perceive that our responsibilities increase in proportion to our knowledge, and the Lord has said, through his servants, that according to the measure of light and knowledge which we receive from him shall we be judged, and by no other standard, for God is just. It is the duty of all who have come to a knowledge of the truth, to practice its precepts, not only when they get to Zion, but also while they remain here; and those who are not willing, or not prepared to keep the commandments of God here, are not prepared to do so there, nor in any other place where they may happen to be. It is a lamentable fact, that there are those in the Church, at the present time, who have ample means in their possession to emigrate to Zion, and yet they put it off, from time to time, perhaps little thinking what a fearful amount of responsibility they thus incur. The word of the Lord to all is, Come out of her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Then let us not trifle with God's commands any longer; for if we do, the Lord will be highly displeased with us, and will withdraw his holy Spirit from us, and we then will be left to ourselves, to grovel in the darkness of our minds, and be afflicted with the wicked and ungodly; and when we would fain be delivered, the way will be closed up against us, if we do not speedily repent. If, then, we have been neglectful in the past, let us in the future, by increasing our faith, und doubling our diligence, atone, in some measure, for our remissness in the past. Let us ever be found in the path of duty, for that is the only one of safety, seeking for the aid and assistance of the holy Spirit, to enable us to work out our salvation from day to day, so that in the end, we may be counted worthy to be crowned with glory, immortality, and eternal lives.

He who prorogues the honesty of to-day till to-morrow, will prorogue his to-morrow to eternity.

Faith in to-morrow, instead of Christ, is Satan's nurse for man's perdition.

ANCIENT WRITING.

Mural and monumental inscriptions—is not the only irreparable loss that apart, the oldest specimens of Roman writing extant, are those discovered in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Next in order of antiquity to these, stand a Terence of the fourth century and a Virgil of the fifth, both on parchment, now in the Vatican. How happens it that, out of the multitude of manuscripts in general circulation for several centuries later, not a single known original, and hardly one perfect copy, of an eminent classic author, has survived the dark ages? The best solution will be found in the never-ceasing war waged against learning and knowledge, by bigotry and ignorance, from the decline of civilization to its revival or new birth. "The Romans," says Disraeli the elder, "burnt the books of the Jews, of the Christians, and of the philosophers; the Jews burnt the books of Christians and the Pagans. The Christians burnt the books of the Pagans and the Jews." Take for instance, the fate of Livy, of whom we have only thirty-five books, and those incomplete, out of one hundred and forty. Independently of the long chapter of accidents common to all, he was honored by the senseless enmity of Caligula, who ordered his works, along with those of Virgil and Homer, to be cast out of all the libraries. Livy was afterwards treated much in the same fashion by Gregory the Great, who placed him in the *Index*. The same Pope (says Disraeli) ordered that the library of the Palatine Apollo, a treasury of literature formed by successive emperors, should be committed to the flames. He issued this order under the notion of confining the attention of the clergy to the Holy Scriptures. From that time all ancient learning, which was not sanctioned by the authority of the Church, has been emphatically distinguished as *profane* in the opposition to *sacred*. This Pope is said to have burnt the works of Varro, the learned Roman, that Saint Austin might escape from the charge of plagiarism, being deeply indebted to Varro for much of his great work, "The City of God." This has been attributed to plagiarism. Cicero's treatise *De Gloria*, was extant in the fourteenth century, and in the possession of Petrarch, who lent it, and it was lost. Two centuries later it was traced to a convent library, from which it had disappeared under circumstances justifying a suspicion that the guardian of the library, Pierre Alegonius, had destroyed it to conceal the fraudulent use made of the contents for his treatise, *De Exilio*, many pages of which (to borrow a simile from the Critic) lie upon the surface, like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what they cannot fertilise. Leonard Aretin, believing himself the sole possessor of a manuscript of Procopius on the War of the Goths, translated it into Latin, and passed for the author, until another copy turned up. The *Causeur* relates a similar anecdote of Augustin Barbosa, Bishop of Ugento, who printed a treatise *De Officio Episcoporum*. His cook had brought home a fish wrapped in a leaf of Latin manuscript. The prelate had the curiosity to read the fragment. Struck with the subject, he ran to the market, and ransacked the stalls till he had discovered the book from which the leaf had been torn. It was the treatise *De Officiis*, which, adding very little of his own, he published amongst his works "to the greater glory of God." This was a bolder stroke for fame than that of an Irish bishop, still living, who incorporated a brother divine's sermon in his charge. Plagiarism, however, was not esteemed so heinous an offence as it is at present, and our actual stores of thought and knowledge have been enriched by it. Thus, Sulpicius Severus, the Christian Sallust, is believed to have copied his account of the capture of Jerusalem from the lost books of Tacitus. How little comparative value was attached for some time after the revival of letters to the classic masterpieces, may be inferred from the confession of Petrarch, that he had seen several in his youth of which all trace had subsequently been lost; among others,

the Second Decade of Livy. Its fate was curious, although not perhaps singular. Tho tutor of a Marquis de Ronville, playing at tennis near Saumur, found that his racket was made with a leaf of old parchment containing a fragment of this Decade. He hurried to the racket-maker to save the remains; all had passed into rackets. Tacitus had a better chance than Livy; for his imperial namesake, after supplying all the public libraries with his works, ordered ten fresh copies to be executed annually; yet thirty books were lost, and the manuscript of what are saved escaped by a miracle; a single copy in a state of rapid decomposition having been discovered in a convent in Westphalia.—*The Edinburgh Review.*

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1866.

TRUE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY.

CHRISTMAS, the 25th of December, will open upon us, on Tuesday next. This is a great day among Christian nations. But what peculiar influence has been imparted to this day that it should occupy so conspicuous a prominence, above other days? Was man created on Christmas? Did Noah enter the ark on Christmas? Or what great event has transpired to make Christmas so memorable? Listen, and I will inform you. In the sixth century of our era, there lived a Romish monk, by the name of Dionysius Exiguus: he imagined that Christ was born on the 25th of December. This wild conjecture, without any substantial proof, was received by the Romish Church, and handed down, like many other foolish traditions, to the present day. Learned chronologists are now fully convinced, that this monkish simpleton conceived the idea, and palmed the fabrication upon the world, entirely unsupported by evidence.

Chronologists have no certain data on which to ground a calculation, fixing the birth-day of our Redeemer. Wieseler, from approximative data, supposes it to have been about the 10th of January. Greswell, from similar data, believes it to have been the 5th of April. (See Smith's Dic. vol. i, p. 1074.)

The day of the crucifixion is not so uncertain. Some chronologists assert that it transpired in March; (See Arago's Astronomy, vol. ii, p. 772;) but the great majority maintain that it took place on the day of the Passover, as described by St. John, the Evangelist, which is said to have occurred on Friday, the 6th of April, corresponding to the 14th of the old Jewish month Abib, now called Nisan. (Smith's Dic. vol. ii, p. 719: also vol. i. p. 1067.)

The year of the Christian era is also a matter of dispute among chronologists.

The Romish monk, Dionysius, in the sixth century after Christ, was the first who proposed to date events and years from the birth of Christ: hence, he and many of his cotemporaries conjectured, from insufficient data, that 532 years had elapsed from his birth; but the supposition, like that of his assumed Christmas, proved, in after centuries, to be incorrect, and that the birth of the Savior, was several years earlier, than he had erroneously assigned. But an alteration in the era could not well be accomplished, without producing an incalculable amount of confusion, among dated documents which had been accumulating for centuries, before the error of Dionysius was clearly detected: therefore, the epithet "*Vulgar*" was attached to our present era, to show that it is not reliable. It is to be regretted, that the term *Incorrect era* was not chosen, instead of "*Vulgar era*," for, then, uneducated persons would have, at once, known the real meaning of the adjective used: but as it is, there are but comparatively few who understand that the year, for instance, A.D. 1866, is an erroneous date, several years less than the true era.

To show the discrepances among chronologists, we will give several examples, in relation to the year of the birth of Christ.*

BIRTH OF CHRIST.	CHRONOLOGISTS.
B.C. 1 yr.	Pearson and Hug.
B.C. 2 yrs.	Schaliger.
B.C. 3 ,,	Baronius, Calvisius, Süskind, and Paulus.
B.C. 4 ,,	Lamy, Bengel, Anger, Wieseler, and Greswell.
B.C. 5 ,,	Usher and Petavius.
B.C. 7 ,,	Ideler and Sanclemente.

If Christ was born 3 years earlier than the Vulgar era of Dionysius, as calculated by Baronius, Calvisius, Süskind, and Paulus, then our present year A.D. 1866, should in reality be A.D. 1869. There is certainly much substantial evidence to prove that the Vulgar era, now in common use, is 3 years too little.

The exact age of Christ, at the time of the crucifixion, is furnished us in the Book of Mormon. The Nephite Prophets had foretold that the night, preceding the day on which Jesus should be born, should be without any darkness. Accordingly, when this great sign was given, the following day which was the birth-day of Christ, was chosen as the first day, of the first month, of the first year of their civil era. But the precise hour of the day on which Jesus was born is not given: but it is certain from the Nephite Record, that he was born after six o'clock in the morning, which was the "to-morrow" referred to in the Lord's declaration to Nephi, on page 433. And, therefore, his birth must have been after 1 o'clock in the afternoon, by the time at Jerusalem, which is seven and one-half hours later than the Nephite time, owing to the difference of the longitude of the two locations. (See Book of Mormon, pp. 426, 432, 433, 434.) It was also foretold by their Prophets that, during the time of the crucifixion, the whole of that continent should be terribly convulsed by earthquakes, in which the rocks should be rent, many mountains be thrown down, many level places be broken up, many cities destroyed, &c.; and immediately three days and three nights of darkness should succeed. All this transpired, as it was pro-

* See Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. i, p. 1075.

dicted; and the exact date of the three hours of earthquakes was given, namely, "*in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, and in the fourth day of the month.*" Thus we perceive that 33 full years had passed away, and also 3 full days of the 34th year, and the fourth day had commenced when he expired upon the cross. (See p. 450.) A Jewish day commenced at 6 o'clock in the morning. The crucifixion at Jerusalem commenced at noon, and ended 3 hours after. With the Nephites just south-east of the Isthmus, this great event would be seven and one-half hours earlier than at Jerusalem, owing to their being seven and one-half hours west longitude from that city. With the Nephites it would be half past seven in the morning, when the three hours of earthquakes subsided, and when the darkness commenced, and therefore the death of Jesus must have been one hour and one-half after the commencement of the fourth day of his 34th year. The three days and three nights of darkness began at 7½ o'clock in the morning, and must have ended at the same time in the morning. On the 454th page, it reads, "Thus did the three days pass away; AND IT WAS IN THE MORNING, and the darkness dispersed from off the face of the land, and the earth did cease to tremble, and the rocks did cease to rend," &c. This proves that it was morning with the Nephites, when Jesus expired, while it was 3 o'clock in the afternoon at Jerusalem. These dates, incidentally given in connection with the remarkable events of the Nephite history, prove, beyond all controversy, the exact difference of time, owing to the difference of longitude of the two countries, which should subsist; and yet the inspired translator, Joseph Smith, died without even noticing this remarkable revelation on the difference of dates. For further particulars on this subject, our readers are referred to an article, entitled, Divinity of the Book of Mormon, published in No. 24 of the present volume of the STAR.

The civil year of the Nephites was undoubtedly of the same length as that of the Egyptians, namely, 365 days. The Mexican Lamanites, when America was first discovered, counted 365 days to the year; and at the end of every 52 years, they added 13 intercalary days. (See Lord Kingsborough's Mexican Antiquities.) The Nephite calender was probably regulated in the same way, being an improvement upon the Egyptian vague year, and maintaining the months and seasons in a permanent relation to each other, with but slight fluctuations.

As the intercalary days were not added until the end of 52 years, it is very certain that the first 33 Nephite years after Christ were each precisely 365 days, equal to 12045 days, to which add the 3 days of the 34th year, and we have 12048 days, as the age of the Savior, when crucified. This is equal to 1721 weeks and 1 day, and also equal to 32 years and 360 days, according to our present method of reckoning 365¼ days to a year.

We have already brought the testimony of chronologists to prove that he was crucified on Friday, the 6th of April. Deduct 32 of our years and 360 days from the period of the crucifixion, and we have April 11th for the exact day of his birth. Also, if we deduct 1721 weeks and 1 day from the time of the crucifixion, we find that the 11th day of April, or the first birth-day of Christ, was on Friday. If he had lived to be 33 years of age, according to our reckoning, that is, including the 8 intercalary days, (one day of which being added every 4 years,) the anniversary of his birth-day would have fallen on Wednesday: but he was crucified 5 days before this, or on the preceding Friday, which, as already observed, was on the 6th of April.

From the above data, we have arrived at the certain conclusion, that our

Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, was born on Friday after mid-day, (Jerusalem local time,) April 11th, which is the True Christmas and New Year's Day. Therefore, the 11th day of April next will be our TRUE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY for the True Era of our Lord 1870.

The set time that Christ, by New Revelation, organized his Latter-day Kingdom, was on the 6th of April, A.D. 1830, Dionysius' Vulgar Era, which is the same as the 6th of April, A.D. 1833, True Christian Era. This stupendous event, so long predicted by the Prophets, took place precisely 1800 years, to the very day, from his crucifixion.

O. Pratt

APPOINTMENTS.—Elder John Parry, now President of Glamorganshire Conference, is appointed President of the Welsh District, in the place of President Abel Evans, deceased.

Elder Elias Morris, now President of Swansea Conference, is appointed to preside over the Glamorganshire Conference.

Elder John Rees is appointed to preside over the Swansea Conference.

THE WELSH SETTLEMENT IN PATAGONIA, SOUTH AMERICA.

The following are extracts from a report written by the Rev. Lewis Humphreys, one of the first settlers in the Welsh colony in Patagonia, addressed to the secretary of the Welsh Colonising and General Trading Company, Limited :—

On my return from the Welsh colony, I was astonished and grieved to learn that many false accounts have been published throughout Great Britain to our detriment. As I participated in all the trials and successes of the colony from its commencement (July 26, 1865) to July 2, 1866, I deem it to be my duty to furnish a narrative of what took place under my own observation.

The unanimous verdict of every one of us is, that the climate is delightful and remarkably healthy. A few among us were ill some weeks after landing, owing partly to the fatigue of carrying and arranging heavy goods, and partly to their frequently getting wet through, and allowing their saturated clothing to dry upon their persons; otherwise no cases of sickness occurred, whilst many instances might be given of the perfect restoration to health of invalids. Indigestion, headache, toothache, colds, and consumption, are unknown there, although I and many others have frequently slept in the open air night after night, in the depth of winter, which is so genial that no evil effects followed an amount of exposure which would certainly have proved fatal in any part of Great Britain. Owing, however, to our being compelled to subsist on salted meat during the passage out, and for the first few months after landing, the majority of us suffered more or less from scurvy and some of us from boils. Still, all these inconveniences did not prevent our enjoying to the utmost the splended atmosphere, which kept us constantly hungry, and was praised by every one as the "healthiest a man ever breathed." I believe that every person in the colony ate double what sufficed him at home.

With such an excellent climate, it is not surprising that the land should be extremely fertile. We discovered several kinds of edible wild plants, such as wild celery and turnips, and a sort of potato, all of which were very good.

Various unavoidable delays which took place at Liverpool and at New

Bay, had the effect of preventing our settling ourselves ready for work until about two months after the proper season for sowing wheat, consequently all hopes of a crop the first year had to be abandoned. We sowed small quantities of Indian corn, barley, potatoes, pumpkins, and garden seeds, all of which grew excellently and yielded a gratifying crop. It is absolutely necessary to sow wheat before the end of the winter, in order that it may fructify before the period of summer heat, which would otherwise scorch it rather than ripen it. The wheat harvest takes place about Christmas, so that the news about the crops cannot reach this country before the end of January next. We labored under the grave disadvantage of not possessing an adequate stock of implements of husbandry, and consequently were unable to sow as much as we ought to have done last season. We had two ploughs from England, and Mr. Lewis Jones obtained an American plough at Patagones. We had also a few Argentine ploughs, but they were of very little use. We kept two men constantly at work ploughing, and succeeded in sowing about 60 acres with wheat; and when I left they were busily engaged preparing ground for a second setting of potatoes, Indian corn, &c. We had at that time been supplied with many thousands of young trees for planting, among which were 4000 fruit trees. The people generally were in excellent spirits, and looked forward to success as a certainty. Those among us who at first took a desponding view, and neglected to cultivate their farms, now praise the climate and the land, and persevere to work in earnest. Nothing whatever was wanted but a crop in its due season, and every indication appeared to justify our expectations of a favorable harvest. The locality has shown itself to be highly satisfactory, and our faith has given place to the certainty resulting from the possession of tangible proofs. And I may be permitted to observe that, as the products of the Chupat valley correspond in all other respect to those of the Rio Negro valley, there is no reason to suppose that wheat and sheep will prove to be exceptions. At the Spanish settlement on the Negro, (Patagones) wheat has been largely grown during the last 20 years on the same ground, and the increase has been frequently as much as forty-fold. I learnt also that the increase of sheep at Patagones has been very pleasing this year. On one estancia alone there are 100,000 sheep, being an increase of no less than 30,000 in one year. The capital on that place last year was 70,000 sheep. Cattle are fat, and horses plenty. The sheep we had at New Bay were large and well woolled, and no doubt they will have increased in the same proportion as the sheep just mentioned; in fact, they were bought from the very flocks referred to. Our horses and cattle were remarkably fine and fat, even in winter, when they require no housing or other attention, as the pasturage is abundant and excellent all the year round. At the time I left we had about 100 cattle, 60 of which were milch cows, two full grown bulls, and a number of younger ones. We had about 40 horses, and each family possessed pigs and fowls, all of which were increasing rapidly. In some of the farmyards the fowls were sufficiently abundant to recall to my mind the homesteads of Carmarthenshire. None of us chose to kill cattle for food, owing to the paucity of their number, and the pigs and fowls had not increased sufficiently for us to commence eating them; and, indeed, there was not the slightest necessity to interfere with them, for the whole territory literally swarms with game—hares, guanacos, armadilloes, ducks, geese, partridge, and ostriches, and the river and bay furnish an ample supply of fish. The hares are very large, and commonly weigh from 18 lbs. to 20 lbs., whilst the birds are very fat, and frequently find their way into the cooking kettle.

It is an act of the merest justice for me to state, that the Government of the Argentine republic has acted in a most liberal and praiseworthy manner towards the Welsh colony. Our president, Mr. William Davies, visited Buenos Ayres near the end of 1865, and obtained from the Government a monthly grant of $700, to be paid until the colony become self-supporting, and supplies have been regularly

furnished ever since through the agency of Mr. H. Harris, a merchant long established at Patagones. I must also not omit to mention gratefully the valuable assistance afforded us by the native Indians. The chief of the tribe sent us a letter asking us for English saddles and rum in exchange for skins, &c., and I understand that a treaty of peace and commerce has since been made. Two families of Indians have been several months established in the colony, and to their assistance we owed the greater part of the game we obtained. They bartered large quantities of fresh meat for small pieces of bread, and exchanged mares for horses. The colonists now possess about 40 dogs, and the consequence of both these circumstances is, that they have begun to tire of a superabundance of flesh meat.

When I left, very few persons lived in the fort; the majority had built brick houses, and many had gone to live upon their own farms.

On the 17th September, 1865, the Commandante of Patagones, accompanied by several Argentine officials, and a military guard, performed the ceremony of formally giving us possession of the territory, and naming our first town Tre Rawson, in honor of Dr. William Rawson, the Minister of the Interior, who has manifested a deep and true interest in the establishment of the colony.

In March 1866, a sealer entered New Bay, and two of the settlers availed themselves of the opportunity to migrate to the Falkland Islands. This desertion suggested to others of a similar class, the idea of sending a memorial to the Falkland Islands, praying to be removed from the Welsh settlement. The memorial misrepresented the state of affairs, and was despatched without the knowledge of the general body of the settlers. In consequence of that memorial, H.B.M. ship Triton visited the colony in June last, to remove the people in a body, if necessary. This offer caused the greatest astonishment in the settlement, and inquiries were instituted to ascertain who among them had been guilty of sending the memorial. The commander of the Triton produced the document for inspection, when it was found that a very few names had been appended, and the greater part of those individuals denied their complicity when taxed with it. We at once declined to leave the colony, and the Triton, having assisted us to repair our little schooner, and presented us with a cask of lime juice, left us where we chose to remain. I need hardly point out that this choice proves the complete confidence of the Welsh settlers in the success of their undertaking. In fact, each man there feels that he is a freeholder; he has no fear of rent day or church rates before his eyes, nor does he risk receiving notice to quit.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOLLAND MISSION.

Rotterdam, Nov. 27, 1866.

Elder Orson Pratt.

Dear Brother,—Thinking a few lines from us might not be uninteresting to you, and the brethren of the European Mission, we gladly forward you this, to let you know how we are prospering, and how the work of the Lord progresses in this part of the vineyard. We are in the enjoyment of most excellent health, for which we ever feel truly thankful to God, the bountiful giver of all good, and we do not feel like slackening our energies in doing all in our power to advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and publish the truths of [illegible] the everlasting Gospel [illegible] of men, who now lay in [illegible] the shadow of death. It is true, the prospect before us is not the most flattering in the world, on account of the many obstacles we have to encounter in a new country, being destitute of our books printed in the

language of the nation, and the lack of means to bring our doctrines properly before the people. Plenty of books are published against us, and the public journals are teeming with all manner of lies, to prejudice the minds of the people against the truth, and like the Galileeans of old, we are everywhere evily spoken of.

We have just had printed one thousand copies of the "Voice of Warning," and if the people will buy, and read them, we hope they will render us much assistance, in breaking the thick shell of tradition which seems almost impenetrable over the minds of the inhabitants of this land. They have so long been the dupes of man-made, hireling priesthood, that they have lost all faith in the true and living God, more than pertains to lip-service, to be seen of men, and to answer their ends in financial affairs, and appear to the world to be religious. Eight out of ten, who hear us preach, or with whom we converse, are ready to acknowledge it is true; it is the Bible; but they have but little inclination to embrace it, and leave the old beaten paths and errors of their fathers, especially when they are made acquainted with our "Mormon" name. They confess our doctrine is true, and the very same that Jesus and his Apostles preached, but it is too unpopular for this generation. If we would come in our own name, following the pride and popularity of the nineteenth century, we would be greeted on every corner, and invited into their stately halls, and edifices of worship; but as we come in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, with the sacred truths of heaven, we are spurned with contempt from their doors.

We find it very difficult to obtain a suitable place to hold our meetings, even by paying for it. We would willingly occupy the public squares, and even the street, to sound the words of life; but the laws are so stringent in this (so-called) Christian land, that all religious worship is confined within the walls of a house; and when we officiate in the ordinances of the Gospel, by baptising men and women after repentance, for the remission of sins, we must seek the shades of night for the solemn occasion. If we should presume to worship our God in the open air, we would subject ourselves to a heavy fine, or continement and servitude within the walls of a prison. This is religious freedom in the Netherlands! This is a proud and stiffnecked people, and it is evident to us that God is fast withdrawing his Spirit from the nations of the earth, and they are fast hastening on to destruction. In the face of man-made priests, and their haughty followers, we stem the current of prejudice and bigotry with everlasting truth, and "Mormonism" finds its way to now and then an honest soul, who is ready and willing to receive us as the servants of God, and listen to the message we bear.

President J. Weiler has just returned from a visit through the Mission, and finds a good spirit prevailing among the brethren. We have succeeded in making dear and warm friends, who feel it an honor to administer to our wants, and to do all they can to facilitate the work, and aid us in our labors. The brethren of the Priesthood are energetic and alive to their duties, sparing no pains in sounding the Gospel trump, and hunting up scattered Israel. They are men of God, fired with the power of the Holy Ghost, and one with us in carrying out the instructions and counsels of the servants of God. Many are interrogating us upon the subject of emigration, and long for the approach of spring. A few have means sufficient of their own, and are anxious to know if they will have the opportunity of going up to Zion the coming season. We are not under the necessity of preaching the gathering to the brethren here, for all who believe and obey the Gospel, are ready to bid adieu to their fatherland, and gather with God's people, so far as their feelings are concerned; but many are deprived of the happy privilege for want of the necessary means. The work with us is not like the rushing hurricane, or the mighty waterfall, producing wonder and astonishment to the beholder; but like the gentle rivulet, whose course is onward, wending its way gently through the low lands, and furnishing its mite to help make up the mighty ocean. Brother

S. Van Dyk is at present busy translating a small work of yours, from the German, entitled, "The true faith," which we hope to get printed also.

May God bless you in all your labors, and all the Elders of Israel, that the inhabitants of the earth may be warned, and our garments be free from their blood, and the honest poor be gathered home to Zion, which is being established in the tops of the mountains, in accordance with the predictions of God's holy Prophets, both ancient and modern, is our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ.

Remember us kindly to the Elders and all the Saints, and believe us your brethren in the new and everlasting covenant,

JOSEPH WEILER,
FRANCIS A. BROWN.

SCANDINAVIAN MISSION.

Copenhagen, Nov. 23, 1866.

Elder Pratt.

Dear Brother,—On the 10th and 11th inst., I had the pleasure of attending a District meeting at Aalborg, Jutland, where a large congregation of Elders and Saints from Aalborg and Wendsyssel Conferences were assembled; good reports were given, and every one bore a faithful testimony to the truth of this work. We had a refreshing time from the Lord, the Saints felt to rejoice, and the strangers present were very attentive.

To-morrow I intend starting for Malmö, Sweden, to attend a Conference there on the 25th inst., and on the 2nd of December, a District meeting at Aarhuus, (Oarhoos) Jutland. In all places I visit, I find a lively spirit among the Saints, and a longing to gather home to Zion, so much so, that I have to give the poor Saints many a word of consolation, that if they are faithful in serving the Lord, and trust in him, their time of deliverance will come.

Please remember me to Elders F. D. Richards, John W. Young, and the brethren in the office, and accept of my kindest regards, in which all here join. As ever your brother in the Gospel of peace,

C. WIDARBORG.

P.S.—Elder L. P. Edholm, who presided over the northern part of Sweden, has been rather poor of health. I have therefore removed him to the District of the Islands in Denmark, the winter here being milder, and not so hard upon a man of weak health.

C. W.

On the second week of the present month, about 600 persons lost their lives, by colliery explosions, in England.

The number of deaths from cholera in St. Louis, U.S., during the rage of the epidemic, from about the 1st of August to the latter part of September, was over 3,500.

THE NOVEMBER STAR SHOWER.—It is not so very many years ago since the planetary spaces were supposed to be untenanted by anything more tangible than that mysterious fluid called ether. * * * When, however, Olmsted witnessed the shower—that of 1833—which immediately preceded the recent one, (a shower heralded and followed by less brilliant displays in 1831-2, and 1834-5-6,) and when, moreover, he had compared the phenomena with those recorded by Humboldt and Bonpland in 1799, the theory which has been so recently and brilliantly confirmed—namely, that the appearances are due to the passage of the earth through a *storm*, so to speak, of asteroids—was given to the world. * * * And nowadays it is held that the bodies which, when they enter our atmosphere, give rise to the beautiful sight we have so recently witnessed, are so numerous that there are 13,000 of them in each part of space as large as our earth; and that, could all which enter our atmosphere in a period of 24 hours—including those visible in a powerful telescope—be counted, they would number not less than 400,000,000. Still, however, there is ground for supposing that in the main these little bodies are congregated into rings, each particle composing the ring revolving like a planet round the sun.—*Macmillan's Magazine for December.*